

29 July 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: OC Executive Board Members

25X1 FROM : [REDACTED]
Secretary, OC Executive Board

SUBJECT : Executive Board Agenda

25X1 A meeting of the OC Executive Board is scheduled for 3 August 1976 (Tuesday) at 1000 hours in the D/CO Conference Room [REDACTED]. Listed below are the agenda items scheduled for this meeting:

- a. Direct Communications from Communications Officers in Charge to the Director of Communications (Refer to Att. A)
- b. Communications Handling of Restricted Handling and Privacy Messages (Refer to Att. B)
- c. Establish OC Policy on Staffing of Communications Equipment Rooms (CER's) and Data Access Centers (DAC's) (Refer to Att. C)

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Attachments:
As Stated

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19 July 1976

D-R-A-F-T

"Possible Item for the Executive Board"

Communications Handling of Restricted Handling
and Privacy Messages

ATTACHMENT B

1. The Agency's reputation for the ability to keep secrets and our procedures for handling particularly sensitive or "hold down" cables make CIA communications a tempting target for misuse. I believe the procedure for handling such messages should be changed so as to reduce the temptation to use CIA communications for illegal or improper purposes and at the same time to enhance the protection of legitimate secrets.

2. The environment in which we are now operating is one in which the propriety of Agency actions will be closely scrutinized. I believe it would be prudent to establish procedures which provide individual communicator accountability and an auditable trail for all such cables. These procedures should enhance security by making the individual communicator aware that there is a formal record showing that he is privy to content of the cable.

3. Under current procedures the cable sender, the recipient and possibly as few as two communicators are aware

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of the content of extremely sensitive cables. No copy is maintained within OC. This, I believe, is as it should be. The disturbing factor under current procedures is that there is no auditable trail for restricted handling messages and only an incomplete trail for privacy messages. No record is made of the name of the releasing official for restricted handling messages. No record is made of the name(s) of the communicator(s) exposed to the content of either category of these sensitive messages. Under the circumstances the communications system could, with some impunity, be used for illegal or improper purposes without the knowledge of any element of OC or Agency management.

4. Mr. Schlessinger established the policy that individual employees are to report to the DCI any Agency activity which appears to be illegal, improper, or outside the Agency charter. Succeeding DCI's have reaffirmed this policy. I believe re-statement of this policy should be included in implementing instructions for new "hold down" cable handling procedures. Knowledge of such procedures should be disseminated throughout the Agency and imparted routinely to any non-Agency official who wishes to use our communications system.

5. The procedures should be simple and straightforward. One element to be included would be maintenance of a log of all "hold down" cables containing the name of the releasing officer,

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the name(s) of the communicator(s) exposed to content of the cable, confirmation of receipt from the addressee station, plus other elements normal to message handling. The procedures should call for destruction of all copies when receipt is acknowledged.

6. Implementation of the suggested procedures would reduce the temptation to misuse CIA communications, demonstrate management concern and action taken to avoid such misuse, emphasize to communicators their responsibility and accountability for their own actions, including, coincidentally, knowledge that they could become involved in any investigation of any leak of information on the content of any such cable which they have processed.

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